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Washington, D.C. 20505

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Honorable George H. Mahon, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In January of this year, the DCI, then George Bush, sent to you the interagency SIGINT agreement signed by the Director, NSA and the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence and approved by the Committee on Foreign Intelligence. This agreement provided a new policy framework for the closer integration and coordination of the CIA SIGINT Program with the National SIGINT Program planned and managed by the Director, NSA. The January agreement called for completion of a detailed implementation plan by September of this year. In accordance with the schedule established by Director Bush and reaffirmed in my testimony before your Appropriations Subcommittee on the 1978 budget, this implementation plan has now been completed and submitted to me by the Director, NSA and Acting Deputy Director of CIA. I have approved this plan and directed its immediate implementation. In accordance with the direction contained in the FY-77 and FY-78 conference committee reports, please find attached this Consolidation Plan for CIA/NSA SIGINT program.

As you will note, the Consolidation Plan provides greatly improved mechanisms for insuring an effective and efficient National SIGINT plan without unproductive program overlap or needless redundancy. Further, the plan provides for operational tasking of CIA SIGINT activities by the Director, NSA and requires reporting of collected product in accordance with his direction, thereby achieving a more responsive and cohesive SIGINT operation. At the same time the Consolidation Plan creates an environment which encourages the ingenuity and the development of new initiatives so important in this large and extremely valuable element of the National Intelligence Program.

Specifically the Plan:

1. Provides for detailed and timely program coordination between NSA and CIA during the annual program planning and budget formulation phase,

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2. Gives the Director, NSA review and approval authority of the CIA SIGINT Program,

3. Establishes the Director, NSA as the operational tasking authority for CIA SIGINT assets,

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I know you share my view that the National SIGINT Program is a vital element of this country's intelligence effort. It is also large in scope and costly. Since assuming my present responsibilities last March, I have been impressed that although the CIA SIGINT Program is a relatively small fraction, both in terms of dollars and people, of the total National SIGINT Program, CIA has unique operational flexibility provided by law and an impressive assembly of talent and clandestine operational experience. These two factors together with the broad base of foreign operations enable CIA to make a valuable and singular contribution to our SIGINT effort and to my overall intelligence mission. I trust you will agree that the attached Consolidation Plan meets our mutual objective of providing an efficient, responsive, coordinated and productive National SIGINT activity while at the same time preserving the unique CIA capabilities.

Please be assured that I will follow the implementation of this plan very closely. As experience indicates, I will be directing adjustments to this plan toward the end of achieving further efficiencies and operational improvements. At your convenience, I would be glad to meet with you personally or with your subcommittee to further inform you on the results of

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this lengthy, joint NSA/CIA study and to elaborate on the rationale behind the final Consolidation Plan. In any case I will be prepared to give you a status report during the FY-79 program and budget hearings.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ Stansfield Turner

STANSFIELD TURNER

Enclosure

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